

Research article

Role of celebrity endorsement upon consumer vanity with mediating role of materialism: Evidence from business students of Pakistan

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to verify how celebrity endorsement influences vanity of consumers also considering the materialistic values as mediator. Study was conducted by using survey method. Well-structured questionnaire was used for the collection of data from the sample of 119 respondents. Results show that celebrity endorsement positively influences the vanity and partial mediation was also found. Study was conducted only in two cities Rawalpindi and Islamabad, so the results cannot be applied to generalized contexts. Different constructs can be used in different contexts for further research with greater sample size.

Keywords: Celebrity Endorsement, Advertising, Consumer vanity, Materialism.

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1. Introduction

“It’s my desire to become like this celebrity” this statement is leading the youth of today synchronizing themselves with the personality of celebrities. According to McCracken (1989) a celebrity is any individual enjoying the acknowledgement and recognition of public and make use of this recognition for a consumer product by appearing in the advertisement along the product. Celebrities are used to manipulate the minds of the customers with the greater influence because they are more exposed on media than the any other group of the society. The mental model about a celebrity is primarily derived from unreliable source of the media like interviews and different articles in newspaper (Berlin, 1996).

According to Mark and Pinsky (2006), any celebrity new or experienced has a level of narcissism for the purpose of self glorification. The celebrities have the higher level of vanity and greater tendency to create a new self in their personality. A company can be genius in manipulating the advertising through celebrity by heavenly depending on false

consciousness and admiring the creation of new looks with the help of vanity (Durvasula and Lysonski, 2008) and materialism (Abela, 2006).

The materialism can be defined as the acquisition and possession of a person in order to reach the desire destination and an display of success in life (Richins & Dawson, 1992). In the Chinese market, the orientation of materialistic values is social comparison and the celebrity endorsers (Chan & Prendergast, 2007). The young people use material possession for the extension of their self (Belk, 1988).

A fixation of physical look and achieving the targets is called vanity (Netemeyer et al., 1995) For Netemeyer et al. (1995), vanity has two distinct components; 1) Physical vanity 2) Achievement vanity. There is also extension of both components with concern and view. It is important to measure vanity when it is back and influenced by the celebrity and it’s necessary for marketers to know how consumers tend to vanity due to vanity in their ideals.

In this research, there our objective is to check the effect celebrity advertising on the materialism and vanity as there is high level of self-importance in the celebrity as (Mark and Pinsky, 2006) has said. So our aim is to check that are the celebrities transfer this vanity to the consumers and effects also on materialism? This knowledge will be really useful for companies in choosing celebrity endorser for their products. It is also a predictor of consumer purchasing that the consumers really purchase for creating the new self and display their success and achievement with it. Mady et al. (2011) Checked the relationship of sentiment to ad with materialism and vanity in the globalize city Dubai but we took an initial step to check that is the celebrity endorsement leads to materialism and vanity in the customers in the young adults of Pakistan? Because youth adult are most influenced by the advertising and celebrities shown on the television (Xie and Singh, 2007).

2. Literature Review

2.1 Celebrity Endorsement:

To communicate the message about the features of a brand, celebrity endorsement is very much common. Companies use the celebrity endorsement as a very effective tool of awareness about features and unique properties of product as well as promotion through which they shaped the positive behavior of consumer to purchase the product brand (Lafferty and Goldsmith, 2004). Concepts of celebrity endorsement are being discussed by different researcher by number of years. McCracken (1989) defines Celebrity endorsement as: "Any individual who enjoys public recognition and who uses this recognition on behalf of a consumer good by appearing with it in an advertisement". According to the Freidman and Friedman (1979) among the all forms of the endorsement the celebrity endorsement is the more useful form of advertisement. The use of celebrity endorsement enables companies to get competitive advantage and strengthen its financial position (Erdogan, 1999). 25% of the American companies get use of the celebrity endorsement due to its significance (Money et al., 2006). The match between the celebrity and the endorsed product can increase the effectiveness of the product.

Similarity, familiarity and likeability are the attributes which makes the message by the celebrity endorser very much effective (McCracken, 1989). The awareness with endorser is the very vital element of the endorser attractiveness i.e. liking, familiarity and similarity are the elements of attractiveness (Tellis, 1998) according to the Goldberg and Gorn (1987) television program and the commercial has the positive relationship with each other. This will be very helpful to make the consumer recall. Good appearance of the celebrity intends the people to purchase more, is very traditional and common concept. (Reingen and Kernan, 1993). physical attractiveness and outlook of celebrity

is very exceptional element to check the effectiveness of the celebrity (Baker et al., 1977, Joseph 1982, Kahle and Homer, 1985, Winham and Hampl, 2008).

Trustworthiness and effectiveness are the main indicator of the credibility of celebrity (Biswas et al., 2006). The endorser perceived honesty, believability and integrity pass on to the trustworthiness of the endorser, and it can be achieved through a very well known, honest and reliable endorser Ohanian (1990). Rating the credibility of a celebrity by the customers the trustworthiness is very important element because of the celebrity which is workable due to trust (Moynihan, 2004). Sincerity, trustworthiness, dependability and honesty are the major components of the trustworthiness. Normally the younger people want to follow the trend used by the celebrities so they are more dependable upon the celebrities as compared to the old people (Pandey, 2011). women trust more upon female celebrity and man trust more upon the male celebrity (Sliburyte.2009). Due to the power of trustworthiness, popularity and the public image companies make use of celebrities to get a great advantage (Song et al., 2008).

The combination of knowledge, skills and experience is the characteristics of expertise (Erdogan, 1999). The ability of the endorser to make honest announcements is called expertise (Erdogan, 1999). Companies by using the celebrities with high skills, knowledge and experience are able to achieve the value of expertise (Ohanian, 1990). The low involvement products which are endorsed by endorser with the high level of expertise have positive impact upon consumers to buy.

2.2 Materialism

A lot of study started from a number of years brings out many different definitions of materialism. According to Belk (1985) the persons own importance to worldly possessions is called materialism. The materialism is person's internal interest of receiving and spending (Hollander, 1986). A person attitude towards the belongings and achievements to get the most wanted place in the society is called materialism (Richens and Dawson, 1992). On the basis of social, religious and philosophical bases materialism has been criticized (Belk, 1982). As a dimension of the personality characteristics it is showed that materialism creates a difference among individuals on the basis of possession as a primary factor for their identity and other side those people possession is secondary importance (Belk, 1984). As the basis of this concept the Richens and Dowson (1992) states materialism as the mindset of the people about the possession and the importance they gave to capture the material things. Materialistic people rectify their social relations with the people through worldly material possession (Rindfleisch et al., 1997). The three dimensions of the materialism are envy, possessiveness and non

negotiatory (Belk, 1984) as compared to the non materialistic people materialistic people are more dissatisfied and unhappy from the life (Ryan and Dziurawiec, 2001, Belk,1985) materialistic people are more concerned with psychological as well as social perspective (Kasser, 2002). The research on the materialism established two theoretical perspective psychological perspective as well as socialization perspective (Kasser et al., 2004).mass media and family values are the elements of socialization and the psychological values are related to the personality and traits. On the basis of this explanation Richen and Dowson (1992) told about those areas in which consumer pay attention to the size and quality of the product purchased. The states or success conscious people pay very strong intention to the materialism (Fournier and Richins, 1994). Self affirmation as the element of ownership of status conscious possession and the display are the main motivational elements of materialism (Fournier and Richins, 1991). Those people who value publically demonstrated and expensive items which are the factor to success and social status are very materialistic in nature Richins (1994). The people with materialistic values more prefer to the publically consumed goods as compared to the publically consumed goods (Wong, 1997). According to the Bearden and Etzel (1982) both the privately and publically consumed goods are the luxurious goods. As the luxury goods are publically consumed goods so the Ziccardi (2001) states luxury goods as the more importance to brand name and the less important the item which is being consumed. The more study by Ger and Belk (1996) on materialism showed that materialism is cultural aspect and it differs from culture to culture.

2.3 Vanity

Netemeyer et al. (1995) made a division of vanity into four main constructs: physical concern, physical view, achievement concern, achievement view. Marketers use appeal of vanity for the promotion of cosmetics, cloths and other product and services (Solomon, 1992) two main contradictions about vanity is created by different authors as said that the vanity is basic and primary phenomena for motivation toward physical appearance or achievement and related to human genes. The other side has point of view that

vanity is associated with the secondary factors like environment, society, culture and socio-economic conditions like conspicuous consumption.

It has been suggested by (Solomon 1985, 92) that the physical appearance has significant role for creating and sustaining a self concept with the help of different products like good dressing, sun glasses, watches and different cosmetics. Physical vanity leads to positive attitude like healthier activities, exercises, and use of different cosmetics but also to negative attitudes like full time dieting program, eating disorder and plastic surgery. Krantz (1987) Found that physical vanity is positively associated with the future consumption like consumer want good physical appearance for the sake of power, self esteem and social benefits.

Schiffman and Kanuk's (2006) said that success and achievements are core values in our society and ranked on the top to show the self. The combination of career and personal goals work as a basic aspiration for the achievements (Dholakia and Levy 1987).Relationship of achievement vanity and product consumption provides empirical and theoretical evidence. By using VALS typology and national survey Mitchell (1993) grouped 22 percent respondents as achievers and 9 percent as emulators in which the achievers are concerned with the career goals and emulators with aspiration of achieving. According to (Kahle, 1983) 16 percent people values the feeling of accomplishment at the top. Different groups consume different products to show their status or success (Belk, 1985).

On the basis of literature we have mainly three hypotheses. The last two hypotheses have sub parts according to the facets of vanity.

H₁: Celebrity Endorsement in advertising affects vanity of consumers.

H₂: Celebrity Endorsement in advertising affects materialism.

H₃: Materialism affects vanity of consumers.

H₄: Materialism mediates between celebrity endorsement and vanity.

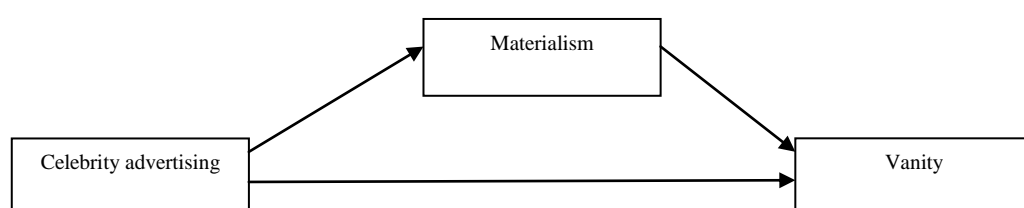


Figure 1: Conceptual model

3. Research Methodology

This section depicts research design regarding data collection, target population, questionnaire, conceptual framework, sampling technique, Independent and Dependant Variables along with theoretical framework.

3.1. Sample

This study was conducted to verify the impact of Credibility of Celebrity Endorsement on Vanity with mediating effect of Materialism. For this purpose data was collected from the population of university students having business education background. Survey method was used to conduct the study having sample size of 130 respondents with the help of well structured questionnaire.

Questionnaires were distributed under self administration among business students out of which 119 responses were received showing response rate of

91 percent. Sixty Five questionnaires were distributed in Mohammad Ali Jinnah University, Islamabad out of which all 65 were returned showing 100 percent response rate and 65 questionnaires in Air University, Islamabad out of which 54 questionnaires were returned indicating response rate of 83 percent. Out of 119 respondents 65 were male (54 percent) and 54 were females (46 percent). Only eighteen (15.1 percent) respondents belong to age group of 15 to 20 years, 60 (50.4 percent) respondents belong to age group of 21 to 25 years, 22 (18.5 percent) respondents were from the age group of 26-30 years and 19 (16 percent). Undergraduate respondents were 47 (39.5 percent), graduate respondents were 25 (21 percent) and 47 (39.5 percent) respondents were post-graduate in education level. Thirty one respondents (26 percent) receives pocket money below 2000 rupees, 44 respondents (37 percent) receive pocket money from 2000 to 4000 rupees and 44 (37 respondents) receive above 4000 rupees pocket money. Demographics of Respondents are shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Demographic Profiles of Respondents

Variables	Categories	No. of respondents	Percent (%)
Gender	Male	65	54.6
	Female	54	45.4
Age	15-20 years	18	15.1
	21-25 years	60	50.4
	26-30 years	22	18.5
	Above 30 years	19	16
Education	Under Graduate	47	39.5
	Graduate	25	21
	Psot Graduation	47	39.5
Pocket Money	Below PKR 2000	31	26
	PKR 2000-4000	44	37
	Above PKR 4000	44	37

3.2. Measures

For the measurement of credibility of celebrity endorser very well supported Ohanian (1990) scale was adopted comprising of 15 items. Five point semantic differential scale was used like for instance ranging from unattractive to attractive (1=unattractive, 5=attractive), untrustworthy to trustworthy (1=untrustworthy, 5=trustworthy), not an expert to expert (1=not an expert, 5=expert). To measure the materialism Richins (1987) scale was used. This scale consisted of six items. The attitude of people towards materialism was measured by two factors personal

materialism factor and general materialism factor. Scale used for this was five point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree (1=strongly disagree, 5=strongly agree). To measure vanity among people scale was adopted from Netemeyer, Burton and Lichtenstein (1995) and consisted of 21 items. Five point likert scale was used ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree (1=strongly disagree, 5=strongly agree).

To analyze the reliability and validity of data different statistical techniques were used. Demographic profiles of customers were examined by descriptive

statistics. Exploratory Factor Analysis was performed for the assessment of construct. Validity and Reliability were assessed by Cronbach's alpha. Regression and Correlation techniques were used to verify the relationship by using Statistical Package Software.

3.3. Analysis

To analyze the impact of celebrity endorsement upon vanity with mediating role of the materialisms all of their dimensions were analyzed through factor

analysis. The purpose of the factor analysis was to reduce the number of statements to smaller number of variables for further analysis. Kaiser Meyer Olkin (KMO) and Bartlett's test were performed to check the appropriateness of all the variables statements taken. The results of both the tests are given below in the Table 2 confirm the appropriate level of the relationship between observed correlation coefficients and partial correlation coefficients. It is essential that for the desirable results the value of this test should be greater than 0.5 (Malhotra, 2008).

Table 2: KMO and Bartlett's test

KMO measure of sampling adequacy		0.681
Approx. Chi Square		1915.501
Bartlett's test of sphericity	Df	861
	Sig.	0.000

As it is clear from the Table 2 that the value of the KMO test is more than 0.5 and also the level of significance is 0.000 which indicate that the values of the KMO are significant indicating the appropriateness of factor analysis. To verify hypothesis that variables are uncorrelated in population the test statistics used is Bartlett's test of sphericity (Malhotra, 2008, p.642). This test shows that all the variables have significant level of correlation at least with each other. The values in Table 2 shows that Chi Square = 1915.501 df = 861 is significant indicating even more data appropriateness of factor analysis.

For further exploration of variables and to check that all the items of variables are independent from

each other factor analysis was run on the 42 attributes. This was performed to check the impact of celebrity endorsement upon vanity with the mediating role of the materialism. To determine the impact of the celebrity endorsement upon vanity the respondents were provided with a five point semantic differential scale and to check the relationship of the materialism and vanity five point likert scale was used. All 42 items were analyzed through factor analysis using Varimax Rotation principal component method. Value of Cronbach's α was found 0.858 indicating appropriate reliability of the entire factor in the study.

Table 3: Scale reliability

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on standardized items	N of items
0.858	0.856	42

The extracted factors and value of their loadings are discussed below

F1: Celebrity Attractiveness. Five variables were loaded on attractiveness of celebrity. Variables of

attractiveness of celebrity endorsement are given below in the table 4 with their respective loadings.

Table 4: Scale Items and summary statistics for F1

Variables	Factor/Item	Factors loading (EFA)	Cronbach's alpha
Celebrity Endorsement			0.713
Attractiveness			
CE1	Celebrity used in this ad is unattractive or attractive.	0.728	
CE2	Celebrity used in this ad is not classy or classy.	0.699	
CE3	Celebrity used in this ad is ugly or beautiful.	0.766	
CE4	Celebrity used in this ad is plain or elegant.	0.749	
CE5	Celebrity used in this ad is not sexy or sexy.	0.773	

F2: Celebrity Trustworthiness. Five variables were loaded on trustworthiness of celebrity. These elements measure the trustworthiness of celebrity. The results of all loading show that trustworthiness of celebrity plays vital role in vanity toward customers (See Table 5).

F3: Celebrity Expertise. For the expertise of celebrity five variables were loaded shown in table 6.

F4: Personal Materialism. For personal materialism four variables were loaded. Variables are shown in the table 7 below along with loadings.

Table 5: Scale Items and summary statistics for F2

Variables	Factor/Item	Factors loading (EFA)
Trustworthiness		
CE6	Celebrity used in this ad is undependable or dependable.	0.664
CE7	Celebrity used in this ad is dishonest or honest.	0.648
CE8	Celebrity used in this ad is unreliable or reliable.	0.757
CE9	Celebrity used in this ad is insincere or sincere.	0.659
CE10	Celebrity used in this ad is untrustworthy or trustworthy.	0.775

Table 6: Scale Items and summary statistics for F3

Variables	Factor/Item	Factors loading (EFA)
Expertise		
CE11	Celebrity used in this ad is not an expert or expert.	0.687
CE12	Celebrity used in this ad is inexperienced or experienced.	0.407
CE13	Celebrity used in this ad is unknowledgeable or Knowledgeable.	0.693
CE14	Celebrity used in this ad is unqualified or qualified.	0.635
CE15	Celebrity used in this ad is unskilled or skilled.	0.714

Table 7: Scale Items and summary statistics for F4

Variables	Factor/Item	Factors loading (EFA)	Cronbach's alpha
Materialism			0.815
Personal Materialism			
MT1	It is important for me to have really nice things.	0.698	
MT2	I would like to be rich enough to buy anything I want	0.621	
MT3	I'd be happier if I could afford to buy more things	0.703	
MT4	People place too much importance on material things.	0.769	

F5: General Materialism. Two variables were loaded for General materialism shown below in table 8.

F6: Concern for Physical Appearance. Five variables were loaded for the measurement of physical appearance shown below in table 9.

F7: View of Physical Appearance. Six variables were loaded for measurement of View of Physical Appearance shown below in table 10.

Table 8: Scale Items and summary statistics for F5

Variables	Factor/Item	Factors loading (EFA)
General Materialism		
MT5	It's very true that money can buy happiness.	0.607
MT6	It sometimes bothers me quite a bit that I cannot afford to buy all things I want.	0.730

Table 9: Scale Items and summary statistics for F6

Variables	Factor/Item	Factors loading (EFA)	Cronbach's alpha
Vanity			0.780
Concern for Physical Appearance			
VT1	The way I look is extremely important to me.	0.748	
VT2	I am very concerned about my appearance.	0.776	
VT3	Would feel embarrassed if I was around people and did not look my best.	0.648	
VT4	Looking my best is worth the effort.	0.665	
VT5	It is important that I always look good.	0.712	

Table 10: Scale Items and summary statistics for F7

Variables	Factor/Item	Factors loading (EFA)
View of Physical Appearance		
VT6	People notice how attractive I am.	0.686
VT7	My looks are very appealing to others.	0.699
VT8	People are envious of my good looks.	0.630
VT9	I am a very good-looking individual.	0.700
VT10	My body is appealing.	0.602
VT11	I have the type of body that people want to look at.	0.622

F8: Concern for Achievement. For concern for achievement five variables were loaded shown in following table 11.

F9: View of Achievement. Five variables were used for View of achievement. These are shown in table below 12.

Table 11: Scale Items and summary statistics for F8

Variables	Factor/Item	Factors loading (EFA)
Concern for Achievement		
VT12	Profession achievements are an obsession with me.	0.697
VT13	I want others to look up to me for my accomplishments.	0.693
VT14	I am more concerned with professional success than most people I know.	0.668
VT15	Achieving greater success than my peers is important to me.	0.685
VT16	I want my achievement to be recognized by others.	0.701

Table 12: Scale Items and summary statistics for F9

Variables	Factor/Item	Factors loading (EFA)
View of Achievement		
VT17	In a professional sense, I am a very successful person.	0.725
VT18	My achievements are highly recognized by others.	0.724
VT19	I am an accomplished person.	0.699
VT20	I am a good example of professional success.	0.710
VT21	Others wish they were as successful as me.	0.660

To further analyze the relationship of variable and to check their impact upon each other regression analysis has been performed. The entire three variables proved significance in the factor analysis. Next objective is to check the impact of celebrity

endorsement upon vanity with the mediating role of the materialism. For this purpose linear regression technique was used. The results are shown below in table 13.

Table 13: Model summary

Model	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	Change statistics	
				R ² change	Sig. F change
1	0.382 ^a	0.146	0.139	0.146	.000
2	0.511 ^b	0.261	0.248	0.115	.000

a. Predictors (Constant), MT

b. Predictors (Constant), MT, CE

As shown in above table, Model 1 illustrates significance change with the value .000 indicating highly significant relationship among celebrity endorsement and vanity of customer. Model 2 also

indicate significance relationship among celebrity endorsement and materialism. The role of mediation is shown below in the table 14.

Table 14: Coefficients ^a

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients β	Std. Error	Unstandardized Coefficients β	T	Sig.
1	2.273	.143		15.861	.000
MT	.215	.048	.382	4.471	.000
2	1.527	.221		6.921	.000
MT	.119	.050	.212	2.374	.019
CE	.356	.084	.379	4.249	.000

a. Dependent Variable: VT

Above table 14 indicates change in value of Standardized Beta changes from 0.382 to 0.379 showing partial mediation of materialism exist between celebrity endorsement and vanity with significant level values . Results indicates that H1 carried to verify impact of celebrity endorsement effect on vanity which is accepted, H2 verified impact of celebrity endorsement on materialism which is also accepted. H3 was also accepted which verified impact of materialism on vanity. H4 verified the mediation of materialism between celebrity endorsement and vanity and partial mediation was found in the study.

4. Discussion and Conclusion

This study attempts to verify impact of celebrity endorsement upon vanity with mediating role of materialism. To develop materialistic values advertising play vital role as consistent with previous studies (Calfee and Ringold, 1988, Bush et al., 1999, Pollay and Mittal, 1993). Similarly advertising can be used as strong media of communication by which materialistic value can be learned. Today rarely products are sold in marketplace without showing concern for vanity and materialism in advertisements. Companies are looking into techniques to foster and influence the aesthetic sense of consumer by using celebrity endorser with higher credibility. It is evident from literature and facts that enormous amount is annually spent on vanity dimension like grooming products, makeup and other cosmetics.

Many studies have been conducted to verify relationship between vanity and materialism and impact of advertising on vanity level and materialistic values but no study has been yet conducted to testify the impact of celebrity endorsement in advertisement and its impact upon vanity with mediating role of materialism in Pakistan. Our study presents an overview how celebrity endorsement can be reaped considering vanity and materialism.

Number of conclusions can be drawn from our study. First is that celebrity endorsement in advertising play significant role in defining level of vanity and its each dimension. Analysis of vanity determines that vanity is important determinant of acquisition

happiness and possession success of an individual (Netemeyer et al., 1995). It has been found in our study that physical appearance and materialistic values were significantly related which is in accordance with Richins and Dawson (1992) that individual appearance can be determined through achievement recognition by others. Paying high prices for greater sense of superiority among people (Lichtenstein et al., 1993) depicts the inter relationship of materialism with vanity.

Our study shows that people are greater influenced by celebrity in advertising than other types of advertising which later on influences the level of vanity and materialistic values. It is important for the companies to take immense care while selecting celebrity for endorsement with greater materialistic values as well as level of vanity because it creates greater sense of superiority in the mind of consumers with greater attachment. People like to have more things with better quality and then they associate those products with their personality. They seek recognition of their material possessions by others and that's the reason a number of costly products are purchased just to illustrate higher level of social class.

5. Limitations and future directions

Research is a continuous process; limitations for one research become future directions for others. Every research study comes up with certain limitations. First limitation of this study was the short span of time. Study was conducted with the help of questionnaire adopted was well structured and widely accepted by previous researchers, though questionnaires were self administered but there lies chance that some respondents responded might haven't stated the response carefully. Sample was taken only two universities of Islamabad, Capital of Pakistan. Furthermore, only business students were tested in this study at three education level of undergraduate, graduate and post graduates. The findings of the study can differ in other parts of country due to variability in sub-culture.

Research can be replicated in longer span of time for more generalized results. It can be conduct in

different contexts or regions to verify results match or differ. This study was conducted to verify celebrity endorsement's expertise, attractiveness and trustworthiness upon the vanity level of consumers with mediating role of materialism further research can be carried out with different constructs. Further research can be tested with different age groups.

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